Pam
U.S.
Negroes

TOWARD THE ELIMINATION
OF
AMERICAN RACIALISM

by

Fred Brownlee

A Humiliating Paradox

After seventy-six years of progress in literacy, industry, the arts and sciences, and loyal pursuit of American ideals, Negro citizens of the United States, regardless of their cultural advancement, are discriminated against in every human want, from drinking at a public fountain when thirsty to worshipping in a common church when spiritually lonely.

Under these conditions, to souls which have become sensitive through the cultivation of the finer tastes in all that is lovely and noble, the words democracy and religion have the hollow sounds of a cracked bell. Faith becomes weak, hope passes into hopelessness, and love turns to hatred. From the depths of such experience the late James Weldon Johnson spoke for the noblest souls in his group when he wrote,

A sensitive soul confesses

"There come times when the most persistent integrationist becomes an isolationist, when he curses the White world and consigns it to hell. This tendency springs from a deep-seated, natural desire--a desire for respite from the unremitting, grueling struggle; for a place in which refuge might be taken."

What a baffling and humiliating paradox--man a failure at socially integrating human beings made of one blood with common intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and spiritual potentialities! Almost two thousand years ago Saint Paul acted on faith that this was true, a faith which, in more recent years, scientists have proved to be fact. Biology has attested the oneness of human blood, psychologists the oneness of human mind, and anthropologists the oneness of potential culture. After a long life of painstaking anthropological research Franz Boas tells us that,

A scientist speaks

"The fact that people of different regions or of different social strata behave differently is no proof that these differences are an expression of racial qualities. On the contrary, we see men of most diverse descent working on the same problems, producing, under proper conditions, the similar works of art. We see people of diverse descent taking over parts of the folk poetry, of the literature of others and making them their own. We see immigrants merging in the people among whom they live. The racialists commit the unpardonable error of extending to local types the legitimate concept of inherited qualities, forgetting that everyone of these embraces endlessly different inheritable qualities. They want to make us believe that a Nordic idiot is worth more than a Chinese genius. We may say fairly that, if we were to select the best one-third of mankind, according to intellect and personality, every one of the large races would be represented in the group."

Conscience Stricken Religionists

Among the first who were humiliated and conscience stricken by the singling out of Negroes for unfair treatment in America were the missionary pioneers. In 1839 a small group of them came

A famous mutiny

into action as a result of the famous Amistad mutiny. Some forty-five slaves, the remainder of a large cargo captured in West Africa and ruthlessly herded in a small sailing vessel called the "Amistad", were approaching their destination off the coast of Cuba when they mutinied and took things into their own hands. They knew that they had come three moons from the east, so ordered a return in that direction. At night, however, the helmsman steered north until, by a zig-zag course, they finally landed at Montauk Point, Long Island, from where they were taken to New London, Connecticut, and New Haven for imprisonment and trial. Prominent in the group who were stirred to action by this incident was Mr. Arthur Tappan, a New York business man, a Christian after the Congregational way.

Tappan and his friends at once called themselves the Amistad Committee and set about to raise money for the defense of the imprisoned captives. They were obliged to carry the case through the United States Supreme Court before justice was obtained and the slaves were set at liberty. Following this, money was raised for a school where the freedmen lived and learned for two years, after which they were returned to West Africa with friends, commissioned to establish the Mendi Mission among their own people, which mission was later transferred to the care of a foreign board.

Thus America, not Africa, became destined to be the main scene of the major work which grew out of the early activities of the Amistad Committee. Slavery as a source of cheap labor supply had made trading in slaves prosperous.

Slavery profitable

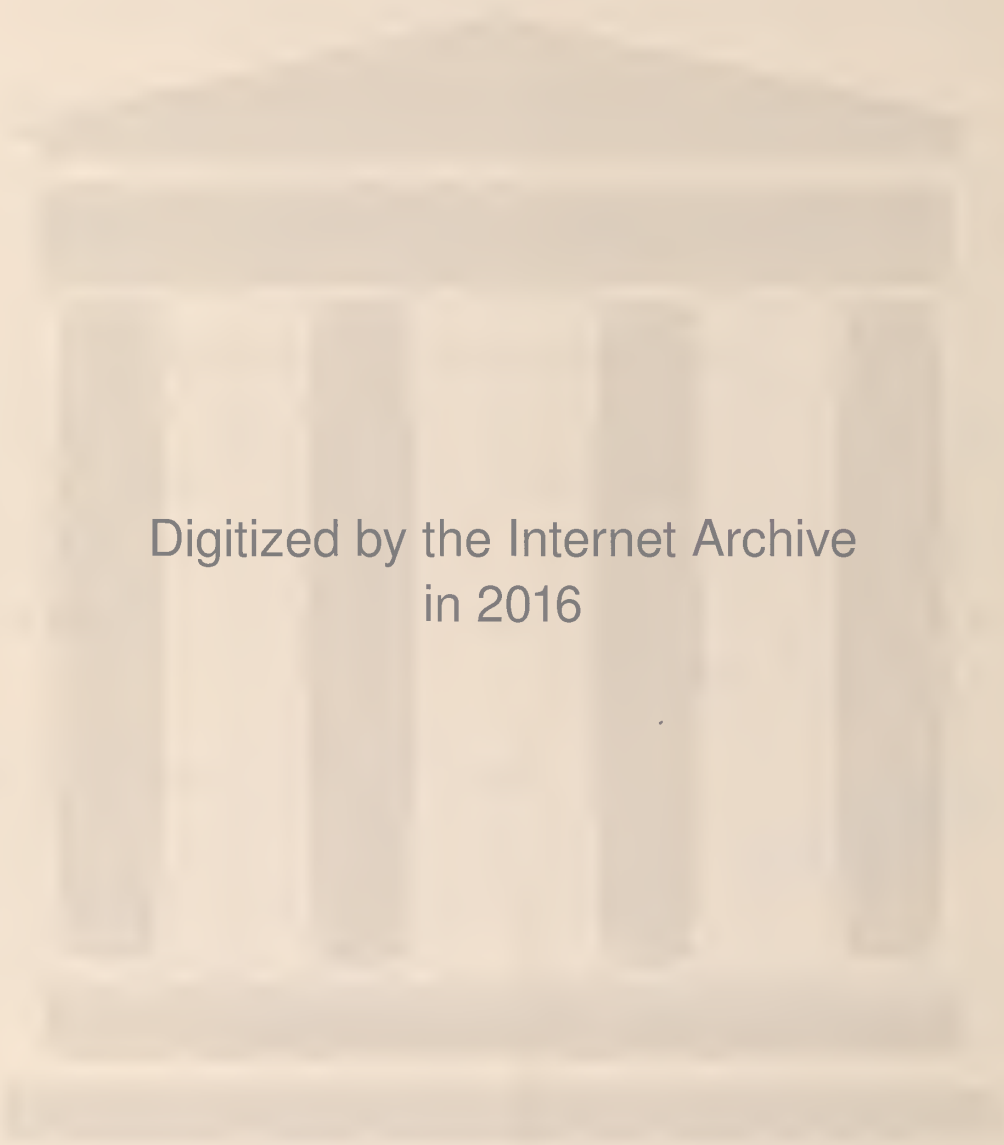
The basic trouble, therefore, was to be found at home rather than abroad. If Christian people in the United States could be made to feel that slavery itself was essentially evil and sinful, it was thought they would voluntarily set their slaves free. So reasoned this little band of conscience stricken religionists.

Already other small groups with differing slogans but with one idea--the abolition of slavery--had begun agitations. There were the extreme and somewhat violent agitators of the William Lloyd Garrison type. On the other hand, there were those who relied on the quieter educational ways of moral suasion. All were asked to meet in Syracuse in 1846, looking forward to cooperation in forming a united anti-slavery organization. There was a division between the direct and indirect actionists, the latter finally voting to form the American Missionary Association as a non-sectarian and non-violent organization.

American Missionary Association chartered

Mr. Tappan was chosen to head the delegation to secure a charter in Albany. As he set out from New York his business associates warned him that such a move would ruin his business, whereupon he said, "My business is for sale, but not my conscience."

Charter in hand, this united group began by assisting ministers of all denominations--chiefly in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Iowa--who were eager to preach Abolition. Occasionally a preacher was found in the South, as was the case of the Reverend John G. Fee, who was stationed at Berea, Kentucky, where he started



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a school for the children of both races while at the same time he fearlessly preached Abolition to his congregation.

The peaceful ways of conscience stricken religionists were soon to be brushed aside, however, by the more direct and antagonizing methods of greedy politicians who sought to drive the wedge between federal authority and states' rights which split the United States wide open. War ensued. As has been true of all wars so was it true of this one--an embittered people were left with wounded pride to settle down to long and regrettable years of reconstruction. The economy of the South was bankrupt. Homes were in ashes. Farms were bare. Workers were gone. Many of the ablest young men of the most gifted and cultivated families were dead.

War and Desolation

Nor did the freedmen fare better. They were left with absolutely nothing except the right to go where they pleased--no homes, no farms, no mules or plows, no jobs, and with eighty per cent of them unable to read and write. So sad and hopeless was their lot that some wondered if slavery were not to be preferred to freedom.

Into this desolate breach the American Missionary Association stepped. Its officers considered freedom a dangerous instrument in the hands of illiterate and poverty-stricken people. Hence, almost before the smoke of battle cleared, they started schools, the first ones being opened near Fortress Monroe, Virginia, where General Samuel Chapman Armstrong was in charge of refugee slaves.

A Chance at Education

The son of Congregational missionaries in Hawaii, General Armstrong was familiar with the industrial schools there, which he considered well adapted to the needs of liberated, ignorant and propertyless slaves who were now obliged to shift for themselves. Hence he wrote to the Association suggesting that the schools at Fortress Monroe be consolidated in an agricultural and industrial institute at Hampton. It was agreed that this be done, provided Armstrong would accept the principalship. He did.

Hampton Institute

It was not long until the Association had schools in many other states. Within seven years following the close of the war there were seven chartered institutions--Hampton, Fisk, Berea, Talladega, Atlanta, Straight, and the theological department of Howard. There were also twenty graded schools with a certain amount of training called "normal", and sixty-nine primary schools.

Ninety-six schools in seven years

It is sometimes said that the Association offered college education to persons who could neither read nor write. Facts prove the contrary. For example, Talladega College, founded in 1867, did chiefly primary and secondary work until 1890. It was not until 1894 that it sent forth its first college graduate, and half its college graduates have received their degrees since 1933. Similar statements might be made about Fisk, Atlanta and Straight, which were called "universities" in their original charters. Their names were but prophecies of things to come.

Colleges and Universities

It was the purpose of the mission schools and colleges to prepare, as quickly as possible, teachers for the public schools which would come in due time, and leaders in the crafts, agriculture, business, the ministry, law and medicine. Thus uninvited and sometimes resented missionaries who were intent on preparing a liberated people for citizenship laid the foundations of future education for those who were said to be uneducable.

Leaders get a start

Insult added to Injury

This was indeed trespassing on the established customs of a proud people whose recent defeat had made them suspicious and resentful of anything which came from the North. Having been forced to emancipate their slaves, it was too much to expect them to welcome with open arms missionary teachers who treated the freedmen as equals. A more psychological approach doubtless would have hastened the day of mutual understanding and cooperation. The late Rabindranath Tagore had occasion to write a young missionary who had asked for information about going to India. Among other things Tagore wrote back,

"If you have in you your pride of race and pride of personal superiority strong, then it is no use to try to do good to others. They will reject your gift, or even if they accept it they will not be morally benefited by it--instances of which abound in India every day. But one thing I ask, will you be able to make yourself one with those you call "natives", not merely in habits but in love?"

Philanthropic Psychologists

The philanthropists who followed in the trails of the conscience stricken religionists were better psychologists. They refused to impose either their will or their way on the people

they would help--neither on the majority nor the minority group. Thus they were able to tempt others to do things for themselves,

Philanthropists prove to be Democratic

who in the doing are getting into the process of changing their own habits, attitudes and convictions. After all, democracy is much more a way of doing things than a form of government. It is in the processes of its activities that one discovers whether or not a country is really democratic. It is through democratic procedure that government may best preserve its democracy and at the same time keep itself pliable for growth and change. In this respect much that is fine in modern philanthropy is due to its psychological attitudes and democratic procedures.

Whatever one thinks about this, it is indeed true that the universalizing of public education for Negroes in the South is largely due to the psychological inducements of the philanthropic

Tempting the South

foundations to get people to want what they most need. Without this tempting-aid to right doing, the mission schools and colleges would have remained sorry sights, and the South would have been greatly retarded in learning to do things for itself.

The General Education Board tempted the southern state departments of education to set up offices of Negro education, offering to pay the salaries of the supervisors if this were done.

General Education Board

By offering conditional gifts, it tempted school and college administrators to get others to do something

with them for buildings, equipment, and endowment. It granted scholarships to some of the abler students who were disposed to prepare themselves to do graduate work. It fostered experiments in education which were of value not only to Negroes but to all people.

With intelligent foresight and determination the General Education Board adhered to these temptation policies, never assuming full responsibility for something it knew could be done indigenously. Thus, while avoiding the sins of paternalism, the Board was able democratically to awaken local interest and encourage self-determination and self-help.

Julius Rosenwald Fund

Likewise, the Julius Rosenwald Fund specialized in this democratic temptation process. It tempted the South successfully to build for itself 5,000 primary and secondary Negro schools at a cost of $25,000,000, of which the Fund provided approximately $4,000,000, the remainder coming from public resources and gifts from the people of both races in the communities. All of these schools are owned and operated by boards of education. More recently the Fund has been tempting principals to become better administrators, teachers to become more natural and realistic instructors, and educators who are charged with training principals and teachers to integrate the learning processes of the schools more intimately and vitally with the processes of living and making a living. Meanwhile, the Rosenwald Fund also has been granting conditional aid to a few public and private

colleges and universities, fellowships for advanced study to young professors of ability, initiative and imagination, aid to Negro libraries which must bear most of the responsibility for their own expansion, and assistance to local public health movements.

A pioneer philanthropic psychologist, so far as southern Negroes are concerned, was Mr. John F. Slater, a Congregationalist of Norwich, Connecticut. In 1882 he assigned a million dollars to

The Slater Fund

a board of ten trustees who were instructed, at their own discretion, to spend the income on the education and welfare "of the lately emancipated population of the Southern States and their posterity ... not only for their sake, but also for the safety of our common country, in which they have been invested with equal political rights."

Shortly before her death in 1907 Miss Anna T. Jeanes, a gentle Quaker of Philadelphia, established a million dollar trust, the income to be used in the education of southern Negroes, and

The Jeanes Fund

requested Mr. Hollis B. Frissell of Hampton and Mr. Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee to name the first trustees who were to administer her gift. As a fitting tribute and a most needed service, it was decided to place a woman supervisor of Negro schools in every southern county which would choose to have such a worker and cooperate in her support. There is no more thrilling and inspiring story than that of these now world-famous Jeanes Fund Supervisors. Their constructive influence in isolated rural schools and communities has been as beneficial as it is immeasurable.

For many years the late James Hardy Dillard, a Virginian by birth and education, was president of both the Slater and Jeanes Funds. His earlier years had been spent as a professor of classics in Tulane University in New Orleans. While there he was a member of the boards of trustees of Straight College and New Orleans University, which institutions since have united in the creation of Dillard University, a cooperative enterprize sponsored by the General Education Board, the Julius Rosenwald Fund, the citizens of New Orleans, the Board of Education of the Methodist Church, and the American Missionary Association.

James Hardy Dillard

James R. Garfield, president of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, in presenting the Roosevelt Medal to Dr. Dillard in 1937 said that the award had been voted to him "for distinguished service in the field of social justice, in recognition of sixty years of wise and devoted work in behalf of the American Negro and the creation of a better understanding between the white race and the black."

In more recent years the Slater and Jeanes Funds have become the Southern Education Foundation, of which Mr. Arthur D. Wright, another Virginian, is the president.

In the days when slavery was at its zenith and prospects were good for those who speculated in cotton, Mr. Daniel Hand, of Guilford County, Connecticut, a Presbyterian, went South to make a fortune. He did so, but the Civil War left him more than bankrupt, for a dishonorable partner had piled

Daniel Hand Fund

up debts which Mr. Hand determined to repay. In less than twenty years he had not only paid off these debts, but also amassed a new fortune. When he retired and returned to Connecticut in 1888 it was with the determination to find a way whereby those who had labored in the cotton fields helping to make his fortune would have a fair and equal chance to make something more of themselves than cotton pickers. Instead of establishing a separate foundation, Mr. Hand gave in trust to the American Missionary Association one and a half million dollars with the stipulation "to use the income thereof only for the education of colored people of African descent residing in the recent slave States of the United States of America." He further stated, "I impose no restrictions upon said Association as to the manner in which they shall use such income for the education of such colored people, whether by establishing schools for that purpose, and maintaining the same, or by furnishing individual aid."

Phelps-Stokes Fund

Through its studies and surveys the Phelps-Stokes Fund has rendered valued service to private and public institutions for Negroes in both America and Africa. Its long-time genial secretary, Mr. Thomas Jesse Jones, has preached in season and out the socializing of the educational process and the cultivation of the soil not only as a means of making a living, but also as a means of living joyously. While the grants of this limited fund have not been large, yet they have, on the temptation-to-right-doing basis, stimulated the giving of others.

Out of the soil came another great fortune which has made King Cotton seem poor. Early in the twentieth century Charles M. Hall, a student in chemistry at Oberlin College, began experimenting in his mother's kitchen with clay, called bauxite, which contains aluminum. He discovered the economical process used ever since in providing a metal which has helped to make the present the stream-lined age with its long-lined passenger trains, airplanes, and skyscrapers.

The Hall Fund

As the son of a poor Congregational minister Mr. Hall knew personally what it meant for handicapped young people to get an education. Through his college mate and close friend, John R. Rogers whose father was the first teacher at Berea College, he learned much about the Southern Highlanders and schools for Southern Negroes. While yet a comparatively young man, Mr. Hall died leaving most of his money for educational work and designating Berea College and the American Missionary Association each as one-sixth residuary legatees. In connection with the Berea endowment he said in his will, "It is my wish that no part of my gift to the Trustees of Berea College be used for the education of the colored race, inasmuch as my gift to the American Missionary Association may be largely applied to the education of such race." Hence the income from the Hall Fund, which amounts to seven and a half million, has been used almost exclusively on schools and colleges for Negroes which were founded by the Association.

Thus the educational procession of the South has been stimulated to move ahead more quickly than otherwise would have been

possible. As a result, today there are 25,000 primary and secondary schools taught by 50,000 more or less well trained Negro teachers who are trying diligently to raise standards, improve methods and modernize equipment. There are also teachers' colleges in every state as well as agricultural and mechanical colleges. There are 2,000 Negro college professors, many of whom hold advanced college degrees. Finally there are hosts of intelligent farmers, business men, preachers, lawyers, doctors, dentists, musicians, artists, and writers. Moreover, most of the schools and colleges, private and public, have Negro principals and presidents. Recently, because of United States Supreme Court decisions, every southern state has begun to wrestle seriously with the problems of how they may provide equal opportunities for Negro graduate study and how they may equalize the salaries of white and Negro teachers.

Remarkable Facts

Self-determined Protagonists

The recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court with reference to graduate and professional work for Negroes and the equalization of white and Negro teachers' salaries are due in no small way to the agressive activities of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, usually referred to as the N double A C P. It was natural to expect that there would appear from among the early graduates of the southern colleges those who would be disposed and prepared to secure for their people the rights and privileges which had been guaranteed them by the Constitution as free and equal

Negroes organize for action

citizens. For years Mr. James Weldon Johnson, a graduate of Atlanta University, was the organization's executive secretary and Mr. W. E. B. Du Bois of Fisk was the editor of its organ, "The Crisis". Mr. Walter White, another graduate of Atlanta, is the secretary today. He has been giving major attention to securing justice in the courts, fairness in teachers' salaries and in seeking to secure a federal anti-lynching law.

Following the first World War citizens of the South, under the inspiration of Mr. Will Alexander of Atlanta, formed the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, which was immediately sponsored by the mission boards and the philanthropic foundations, but not without southern financial aid. This Commission has succeeded in changing the attitudes of editorial writers of southern newspapers, and has had much to do, largely through its intelligent and alert women's division under Mrs. Jessie Ames, formerly of Texas, with the phenomenal reduction in the number of lynchings. The Commission continues to be a useful means of ironing out difficulties which otherwise might easily lead to racial conflicts and riots.

Southern Interracial Commission

Contemporary with the work of the Southern Commission has been that of the Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America under the direction of Mr. George E. Haynes. This service is nation-wide, bringing together ministers and laymen of both races and many denominations who are earnest in their endeavors to help Christians put into practice the doctrines of divine

Federal Council of Churches

fatherhood and human brotherhood.

Another effective organization which came into being about the time the interracial work was started is the National Urban League under the leadership of Mr. Eugene Kinckle Jones. This movement was a response to confused and bewildering urban situations in the North with their attendant injustices and disillusionments which developed following the migration of 2,000,000 Negroes from the South to the North at the time of the first World War. The League renders valued service in employment adjustments and counsel, improvement of housing and living conditions, and in adjusting an ill-prepared people to changed and changing conditions in unfriendly and sometimes hostile environments.

The Urban League

Of much longer service have been the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations whose urban and student groups have been helpful to youth all over the country and in all Negro colleges. Their urban centers, college chapters and annual conferences have served as useful liaisons between the earlier and more conservative activities of the mission schools and colleges and the later more realistic movements which have grown out of sociological, economic, and political studies and agitations. A major service of these organizations has come through their welcome domicile and recreational facilities for transient and residential young people.

Christian Associations

It is as significant as it is gratifying that Mr. Julius Rosenwald also applied his temptations to right doing to these Christian Associations through a standing offer of financial aid to cities which would build adequate centers for their Negro youth.

With all this--religionists and their mission schools and colleges, philanthropic psychologists with their temptation money and the spread of public education, trained protagonists and their service organizations, interracial commissions and their effect on newspaper editors and the reduction of lynchings, Christian Associations and their care of the religious and recreational life of youth--some are beginning to think that outside aid may be withdrawn, that the whole problem is in process of natural solution, that things can now move forward on their own momentum. This judgment is premature.

Narcotic effect of peripheral success

The task is far from done. The South is scarcely on its feet. The North has cities with much larger Negro populations than any southern city. Racial confusion and dissatisfaction have spread to the North, the East and the West. Canadians who train their white and Negro soldiers in the same divisions wonder how we square our democracy with the treatment of Negroes in the United States Army and Navy, to say nothing about the defense industries. Mexicans and South Americans, largely a dark-complexioned people, question the sincerity of our democracy and are dubious about our good will parties when they know about our discriminations against Negroes. Hence, while much has been done to make amends and set

our house in order, more still remains to be done. At least, this is no time for those who have put their hands to the plow to turn back.

Disturbing Announcements and Tendencies

Yet at this critical juncture, when racialism is no longer sectional and democracy is on trial, have come the announcements that the General Education Board and the Julius Rosenwald Fund are in process of liquidation--that they are soon to go out of business.

Foundations liquidating

As an editorial writer, commenting in the New York Herald-Tribune, said concerning the General Education Board's announcement in its last annual report, this is indeed melancholy news.

Since 1902 the General Education Board has spent, from capital and income, $271,307,835, considerable of which has gone for Negro work in the South. There remains almost $15,000,000, half of which is ear-marked by previous commitments. It would be impossible to evaluate appropriately the fine things which the spending of such a vast sum has made possible. In vision, democratic procedures, and faith in future generations to handle their own affairs, the General Education Board has furnished excellent precedents for all time. Its service to Negro Americans alone is incalculable, to say nothing of what it has done for general education, both in experimentation and gifts to white and Negro colleges and universities for buildings, equipment and endowment.

Vast sum spent

The Julius Rosenwald Fund stands second in benefactions to Negro education and welfare. It is significant as its days are coming to a close that the Fund should have its fundamental philosophy called to public attention adversely by a political demagogue. Governor Talmadge of Georgia went on a Nordic rampage in the midst of a hot summer when the peach crop of Georgia was threatened for lack of rain and thinking people were mopping perspiration from their brows. He dismissed four eminent men from the Georgia University system, defied the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and threatened to burn all books which, by his definition, advocate the co-education of Negroes and whites--all because of the "insidious influence" of the Rosenwald Fund which the governor accuses of standing for "racial equality".

Rosenwald Fund Accused

Doubtless this Hitlerian outburst will call into action many admirers of the officers of the Fund. In the long run it will make new friends for the cause of interracialism. Boston has had a way of increasing the circulation of "evil books" by proscribing them. Will Rogers once said that the best way to make people intelligent would be to pass an anti-education law. As a recent writer put it, "Even salutes take on a new dignity when verboten."

Nevertheless, what Governor Talmadge has done could not have been done were it not for the commonly accepted doctrine of American racialism. When political demagogues can screen their own selfish ambitions and nefarious actions with high-sounding denunciations of practices which run counter to long-accepted ideas and customs, those who are striving to do things fundamental in racial matters

should be kept free from political domination. This is particularly true of the southern supervisors of Negro education. It is they, working quietly and persuasively, who have been instrumental in the spread of public education for Negroes. It has been most delightful to see these men grow in magnanimity and racial adjustment themselves under freedom from political control. That North Carolina is today in the vanguard of every form of Negro welfare is due largely to the fact that thirty years ago the General Education Board appointed Mr. N. C. Newbold, a North Carolinian, supervisor of Negro education. The story of the way he has moved steadily from securing accredited primary and secondary schools to teachers' colleges and a public liberal arts college which now does graduate work in cooperation with the University of North Carolina, and the way in which he is approaching the actual equalization of white and Negro teachers' salaries is a southern epic of thrilling interest and consequence. If this be true of Mr. Newbold in progressive North Carolina, it is not difficult to see why lonely Mr. Easom should be kept free for years to come from the political demagogues in yet-to-be-awakened Mississippi.

Keep State Supervisors Free

Equally bewildering during recent years have been the changing policies of mission boards of all denominations as reflected in the numbers of schools which have been closed, reorganizations of these boards and consolidations of departments within them. New directors, charged with formulating policies and determining activities for the future, find them-

Mission Boards at the Crossroads

selves confused and baffled by their tasks at a time when familiarity with the past is as important as vision for the future. They have read much about the "New South" and are wondering if it is not now able to handle alone its own problems. Thousands of Negro migrants have come to seek work and shelter in their own cities. They are no longer sure that the missionary tales about the capacities and abilities of Negroes are true. This is at once a disadvantage and an advantage: a disadvantage in that unfamiliarity with history makes it easy to discontinue unfinished work, an advantage in that it makes those who may be over-zealous about the past conscious of the present, and particularly conscious of the fact that Negro problems and issues are no longer sectional but nation wide.

Negroes disillusioned in the North

On the other hand, Negro migrants who have come from the rural areas and small towns of the South to the large industrial cities of the North are also disillusioned. Untutored and unlettered as they are and miserably unadapted to their new environments, nevertheless, they came with great expectations by way of fair treatment. They were told that the North was liberal and would treat them justly. Instead of being welcomed they are being discriminated against in employment, shunted aside in housing, told that their children are not wanted in school with white children, turned away from parks and bathing beaches, refused service in restaurants, and the best

of them denied accommodations in hotels, and made to feel uncomfortable at movies, theaters and concert halls, to say nothing about white churches.

It is such things which give one pause in these critical days--liquidating foundations, indifferent and withdrawing mission boards, overworked and worried administrators, bewildered and questioning directors, ambitious political demagogues. The task is far from done. As James Weldon Johnson put it,

Negroes and Whites here to stay

"We and the white people may as well make up our minds that we, the same as they, are in this country to stay. We may have been causing white Americans some annoyance, but we ourselves are not passing the time in undisturbed comfort. White America will simply have to sustain a situation which is of its own making."

In an interracial address at a conference called by Mr. Newbold at the University of North Carolina, President Graham was asked to speak. He took only a few minutes, but this is the momentous thing he said,

Ways of Cooperation

"With reference to Negroes we have tried the ways of subjugation. They did not work. We have been trying the ways of intimidation. They, too, do not work. The only ways which will work are the ways of cooperation."

Cooperation on a free and democratic basis is fundamentally impossible so long as racialism controls our thinking, fixes our habits and dominates our attitudes. Said Mr. Channing Tobias, General Secretary of the Negro Division of the National Y. M. C. A.,

"If you discriminate against me because I am dirty, I can make myself clean.
If you discriminate against me because I am bad, I can reform and be good.
If you discriminate against me because I am ignorant, I can learn.
If you discriminate against me because I am ill-mannered, I can improve my manners.

But if you discriminate against me because of my color, you discriminate against me because of something which God himself gave me and over which I have no control."

Guilty Still

Taking advantage of conditions over which people have no control is a familiar fact in human history. It has always been the way of the exploiter. It is an accustomed way by which those who have gotten the upper hand maintain their status. But it is an irreligious, unethical, undemocratic way. The Amistad Committee's call of the Syracuse meeting in 1846 referred to the exclusion of the "sins of caste", concerning which they said, "To bear such crimes in silence, not to say direct practice or fellowship therein, is enough to paralyze the faith and hope of the Church." They would have been equally correct had they used the word democracy instead of church.

Sins of Caste

In the July 1941 number of the JOURNAL OF NEGRO EDUCATION on "The Negro and the Present Crisis", Mr. Charles S. Johnson shows clearly how racialism helps to make a mockery of our democracy. He says in part,

Our Social Pattern

"The social pattern of the United States with respect to its Negro minority, makes extremely difficult any conception of democracy about which we know, and complicates seriously the exercise of normal political and institutional functions. The assumption seems to be that racial minorities which are unassimilable in terms of the racial standards of the dominant group, can be socially segregated under conditions that are, legalistically at least, valid. But segregation as a policy runs counter to both the democratic theory and the exigencies of an open and complex society. For, whereas, the general principle of social regulation and selection is based upon individual competition, special group segregation within this broad social framework must be effected artificially, and by the imposition of arbitrary restraints. The result is that there can

be no segregation without discrimination, and discrimination is neither democratic nor moral.

"By any criterion whatsoever, except the purely abstract and essentially meaningless one of identifiable color, the population of the United States would sort itself according to the distribution of individual traits and skills, with no monopoly for any class or group that could not, in large part, be accounted for in the distribution of opportunity. For there are few instances of rights denied Negroes, on the grounds of native racial incompetency, that when granted have not revealed competency. If, thus, the structure of the democratic theory is equality of opportunity, the defect in the theory is not so much that it is decadent, as the Nazi spokesmen have so eloquently asserted, but that it is immature and untried."

Under such irrational and unfair circumstances, how to eliminate American racialism democratically is an altogether overwhelming problem. As a matter of fact it is a long series of problems which emerge whenever the members of the Negro group trespass on the self-determined privileges of the white group. On that basis racialism, when correctly analyzed, becomes a rationalization of desired conduct, an intellectual way to maintain one's social respectability, a polite defense of "racial honor". Were it not for this, demagogues like Governor Talmadge could not so easily remove liberal-minded educators from their positions, while at the same time they parade in the cloak of Nordic superiority.

Racialism--
a rationalization
of desired conduct

Some Questions for Consideration and Discussion

1. Institutions and institutionalism.

Institutionalism has a way of dulling sharp-edged instruments for the dissection of truth. What to do with inherited institutions is frequently a perplexing question. Endowed colleges have a tendency to become unduly proud of themselves and worship their makers.

Paul Moody once said that his father was a dynamic, progressive evangelist, but the Bible Institute which bears his name seeks to indoctrinate fixed minds with static ideas. Martin Luther was a reformer, but some of the branches of the denomination named after him have not had a new idea since his death. Jesus declared that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, but many of his devotees are still strict Sabbatarians. There are those who have begun to wonder if it is not about time to stop sending outside aid to Negro colleges in the South for similar reasons.

Someone has to pay the cost of institutional education--the state, parents, or generous donors. Students cannot pay in full and sometimes the best of them are unable to pay anything. In this respect Negro colleges are no exception. When racialism will have vanished the verbal distinction of Negro colleges will fade away too.

Fisk, Atlanta, Dillard, Talladega, Hampton, LeMoyne, Tougaloo, and Tillotson, to mention only a few, must continue to receive outside aid for a long time if they are to live. The same is true for Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, Chicago, Vanderbilt, Trinity, and Tulane, to say nothing about smaller first-class colleges like Dartmouth, Williams, Amherst, and Oberlin.

The main thing is not where the money comes from but what it makes possible. Is education really taking place? Is learning going on? Are students becoming disposed and prepared to advance in wisdom and understanding? Are they learning how to function intelligently and effectively according to the democratic ideal? Are educators

deceiving themselves by thinking that the democratic process is promoted through learning by rote what academic textbooks have to say about civics? Unless schools and colleges in the conduct of their own affairs provide for participation in democracy, should they be supported by mission boards which seek to establish the kingdom of heaven, and educational foundations devoted to democratic ideals? These are a few primary questions which may point the way to what should be done about Negro institutions in the South.

2. Democracy and racialism.

The deeper one looks at the question of racialism within a democracy the more the two words become a contradiction in terms. Racialism nullifies the principles of democracy. It makes a mockery of the government which likes to say that it is of the people, by the people, and for the people. Which people? Presumably all people. But what about one-tenth of the people in the United States? When a majority group determines the status and limits the privileges of minority groups, as is true in America, wherein does this differ from totalitarian practices?

Out of the work described historically in this paper have come excellent people of both races who are well trained in the use of democratic methods in dealing with inter-group relationships. Why are they not used more in dealing with these problems outside the schools and colleges where they have lived and worked? Is the Negro college with a bi-racial faculty likely to promote or retard democratic procedure in inter-racial understanding and cooperation? On the other hand, what is to be done when communities become alarmed

at the mildest assertions of independence on the part of Negroes and civil officers give them to understand that this is a white man's land, and that if it takes guns and ropes to prove it, they are ready to proceed? Should such questions be left entirely to the communities in which they exist?

3. Racialism and communal interests.

If we talked less about racialism and more about the common needs of all people in a community, would the integration of minority groups proceed more rapidly and with less tendency to friction? When members of a minority group have to beg privileges and considerations from the majority group, does it not cheapen respect for personality? On the other hand, when the sense of superficial differences is lost in the consideration of things of common vital concern to everyone, are not self-respect and mutual respect heightened? For example, food, shelter, health, education, citizenship, wholesome use of leisure, and spiritual growth are of basic concern to everyone in a community. Can these needs be met for one group and not for the other without affecting the welfare of both groups? Can the white man say to the colored man without injury to himself, and vice versa, "I have no need of thee"? Was Booker Washington right when he said, "The white man cannot keep the colored man in the gutter without staying there himself to hold him down"?

In Dr. Odum's regional studies he includes all groups. When he talks about share croppers it is not Negro share croppers and white share croppers, but just share croppers. And when he talks about the waste of land through erosion he does not speak of the white man's

farm as over against the colored man's farm or forget the colored man's farm altogether, but of all farms and their wasted land. The same is true when he speaks of institutions. He does not refer to white churches and colleges and Negro churches and colleges but to churches and colleges and their relation to the development of people. Moreover, he used the best brains and abilities of people of both races in making his studies without apparent consciousness of racialism. Is this the best way to move toward the elimination of American racialism?

4. Racialism and sectionalism.

Sectionalism produced the Civil War and made a mess of Reconstruction. Is not the imposition of the ideas and ideals of one section of the country on other sections bound to do such things? If the North had long ago ceased to think of racialism primarily as a southern problem, would it be better prepared to see and understand its own racialism today? Is it sectionalism which helps to blind the citizens of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles to the spread of racialism? Have mission boards and welfare foundations, particularly mission boards, had a policy for racial service in the North commensurate with that for the South? Is the withdrawal from racial work in the South indicative of the fact that now that racialism has become a national issue it is a good thing to get out of entangling alliances? Does it help matters when the South points an accusing finger at the North and the North replies with--"Why didn't you treat Negroes wo well that they would care to stay at home where they belong?" Can the North meet this problem simply by establishing community houses,

building separate swimming pools, equipping racial playgrounds, opening racial health centers, and zoning residential areas on a racial basis?

5. Future missionary and philanthropic service.

Is there a need for a strong, broad-minded national organization with an expert staff for counsellor service in racial matters, a department of studies and surveys, an advisory division in education and the democratic process, a division of appropriations to schools and colleges of strategic significance to the future? Should such an organization be a consolidation of existing departments of racial service in mission boards and philanthropic foundations insofar as their departments of racial service are concerned, or should a new organization be created and jointly supported by present organizations and movements engaged in racial service, such as the N A A C P, the church groups, the Urban League, the Southern Regions Planning Commision, the Committee on Interracial Cooperation in the South, and the Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches, and so on?

Of what constructive service might such an organization be to city, state, and national government? To labor organizations? To industrial corporations? To colleges and universities which admit Negro students but fail to make them a part of college life? To churches which keep their doors closed to "aliens" and those which would like to open their doors wider?

Proposed Seminar

With a view to discussing such questions and their implications, the readers of this paper are asked to join, in seminar manner, in a free and open discussion in New York on January 16, 1942, the place and hour to be designated later. As Hudson Strode says in his FINLAND FOREVER, quoting Aleksis Kivi, "The matter needs thinking over--wisely from the roots upward."

New York City
October 3, 1941